



**CITY OF SANTA BARBARA
CREEKS RESTORATION/WATER QUALITY IMPROVEMENT
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MINUTES**

REGULAR MEETING

June 16, 2010

David Gebhard Public Meeting Room, 630 Garden Street

CALL TO ORDER

Chair Moldaver called the meeting to order at 5:37pm.

ROLL CALL

Committee members present: Chair Moldaver, Paul Bullock, Betsy Weber, Daniel Wilson

Committee members absent: Natasha Lohmus

Liaison members present: None

Liaison members absent: Councilmember Michael Self, Planning Commissioner Michael Jordan

Staff present: Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager Cameron Benson, Water Resources Specialist Autumn Malanca, Water Quality Research Coordinator Jill Murray, Creeks Outreach Coordinator Liz Smith

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Motion:

Committee members Wilson/Bullock to approve the minutes of the special meeting of May 12, 2010.

Vote:

Voice vote 4/0.

AGENDA ADJUSTMENTS

None.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No one wished to speak.

COMMITTEE MEMBER AND STAFF COMMUNICATIONS

Mr. Wilson invited Creeks Division staff and Committee members to visit Arroyo Burro Creek near his office, to view a typical urban creek setting smothered with ivy and weeds, a good example of potential restoration opportunities throughout the City.

Mr. Moldaver reported that Ms. Weber and the Environmental Defense Center hosted a gala fundraising event at the Stow House Inn in Goleta; and, that the Citizens Planning Association has hired LeeAnne French as their new director, and their annual meeting

on Saturday will honor Mark Chytilo, Bob Field, Don Olson, Marty Blum, Donna Jordan, Tom Murphy, and the No on J Committee, for career and individual service to natural resources on the Central Coast.

7. BUSINESS ITEMS

a. Storm Water Management Program Status Report

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive a status report on the City's Storm Water Management Program (SWMP).

Documents:

Staff Report – June 2010

Power Point Presentation – June 2010

Speakers:

Autumn Malanca, Water Resources Specialist

Committee Questions/Discussion:

Committee members asked questions regarding whether community members are returning enforcement response cards; how other City Departments are responding to Creeks Division guidance and training; whether recommendations are being included in the Plan Santa Barbara update; and, what the five year timeline means.

Ms. Malanca reported that staff has received good responses on the enforcement response cards; and, that other departments have been working hard to meet and track SWMP requirements, and that it is an ongoing effort.

Mr. Benson reported that there is a proposed policy in the Plan Santa Barbara document that incorporates the SWMP standards by reference.

Ms. Malanca reported that the SWMP was approved by the Regional Water Quality Control Board in 2009, and at the end of the five year permit in 2013, the SWMP will be revisited and revised, and the City has to reapply for the next five year period, although the Regional Board has the authority to amend the program at any time.

b. Water Quality Monitoring and Research Program Update and Fiscal Year 2011 Research Plan

Recommendation:

That the Committee receive an update on the Water Quality Monitoring Program and concur with the staff recommendation to implement the proposed Research Plan for Fiscal Year 2011.

Documents:

Staff Report – June 2010
Power Point Presentation – June 2010

Speakers:

Jill Murray, Water Quality Research Coordinator

Committee Questions/Discussion:

Committee members asked questions regarding whether it would be effective to remove sediment with DDT present, or best to leave it undisturbed; whether copper levels found are normal; and, whether the amount of trash in the creeks has decreased over the last decade.

Ms. Murray reported that DDT results have not been compared to thresholds recommended for dredging sediment, but that removing sediment may stir up higher concentrations below; and, that while low levels of dissolved copper can harm juvenile salmonids, toxicity levels are below the Environmental Protection Agency's levels of concern during dry weather, and is likely coming from natural erosive sources in the upper watersheds.

Mr. Benson reported that the amount of trash in the creeks varies due to many factors, such as scouring, when sampling is taking place, and how recently it has rained; and, that staff has increased efforts on trash removal, and new storm drain screens prevent some trash from reaching the creeks.

Mr. Wilson suggested partnerships with key retail stores who are selling products containing pyrethroids, and educating retailers and the public about less toxic products and ideal seasonal use of products; and, recommended that a portion of the sampling budget be dedicated to studying surfactants in the aquatic environment.

Committee members asked questions regarding to what extent pets and animals may be the source of fecal coliform when berms are closed; and, at the Arroyo Burro Estuary, whether samples are taken from the creek side of the estuary and the ocean side of the berm at the same time.

Ms. Murray reported that even if beach warnings are for one class of indicator bacteria and not another, there is probably some of both present in different levels; that using Leadbetter Beach as an example, where there is not usually a creek, falling tides can lead to increased beach warnings by pulling out groundwater with high levels of bacteria or washing decaying kelp up onto the beach, which can incubate bacteria; and, that samples are taken from both sides of the Arroyo Burro Estuary.

Committee members asked how toxicity is measured; and, whether our creeks are healthy.

Ms. Murray reported that to test toxicity, samples are sent to a lab in Ventura where they add test organisms such as juvenile fathead minnows to the sample and see how many survive over five days, and the Water Board considers the sample toxic when there is less than 80% survival; and, that personally she feels very safe swimming at our beaches, and loves having her children to swim at the beaches; that if a community member is immune compromised they should not swim near outfalls, or if they have an open wound, she would not recommend wading in warm lagoons due to environmental bacteria that is always there, and not directly related to pollution, especially at higher temperatures; and, that the creeks are in good shape, and provide habitat and potential habitat upon restoration, but that there are still problems to address.

Mr. Moldaver suggested that reduction of use of products containing bifenthrin also be included in outreach efforts to the community, retailers, and suppliers, along with the Green Gardener Program.

Mr. Wilson suggested that there is still work to be done, and that when there are steelhead spawning in the creeks and can be fished, the program will have succeeded.

Motion:

Committee members Wilson/Weber to concur with staff recommendation to implement the proposed Research Plan for Fiscal Year 2011.

Vote:

Unanimous voice vote

Mr. Benson reminded the Committee that the July 21 meeting will be cancelled, and that the next meeting will be August 18.

ADJOURNMENT

Motion:

Committee members Wilson/Bullock to adjourn.

Chair Moldaver adjourned the meeting at 7:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Cameron Benson
Creeks Restoration/Clean Water Manager